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Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08
FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03
SP-02 OMB-01 USIE-00 SS-15 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00
L-03 H-01 PA-01 PRS-01 PPT-01 CA-01 /078 W
----------073818 161526Z /45
O 161412Z DEC 77
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5469
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 14575

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EFIN, EINV, NI
ASUBJECT: AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL GROUP CASE IN NIGERIA

REF: (A) USUN 5281, (B) LAGOS 14337, (C) LAGOS 14063

1. MEA ECONOMIC DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR AFOLABI STATED THIS MORNING THAT FMG MEETING WITH AIG PRESIDENT GREENBERG HAS BEEN SET FOR 11:00 A.M. JANUARY 5, AT THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE. MINISTRY OF FINANCE PERMANENT SECRETARY MUSA BELLO WILL CHAIR MEETING. NIGERIAN PARTIPANTS WILL INCLUDE MINISTRY OF TRADE PERMANENT SECRETARY ALHAJI ALHAJI; CENTRAL BANK DEPUTY GOVERNOR AHMED; GENERAL MANAGER, NIGERIAN BANK FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY; DIRECTOR, INSURANCE DEPARTMENT, MINISTRY OF TRADE; AND MEA ECONOMIC DEPARTMANT DIRECTOR.

2. IN RESPONSE TO REPEATED EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT COMMISSIONERS OF TRADE AND FINANCE BE AT MEETING, AFOLABI SAID THAT JANUARY 5 MEETING WILL BE A QUOTE PRACTICAL, WORKING MEETING AT WHICH ALL OF THE KNOWLEDGEABLE DECISION-MAKERS WILL BE PRESENT. AS TOP CIVIL SERVANTS IN THEIR MINISTRIES, PERMANENT SECRETARIES ARE THE ONES WHO RECOMMEND AND IMPLEMENT POLICY. IF AIG EXECUTIVES STILL WISH TO CONFER WITH COMMISSIONER-SMC MEMBERS, CONFIDENTIAL

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THEY CAN REQUEST THIS AT CONCLUSION OF JANUARY 5 MEETING AND REQUEST WILL PRESUMABLY BE HONORED UNQUOTE. EMBASSY URGES GREENBERG'S PARTICIPATION.

3. JANUARY 5 SCHEDULING IS RESULT OF DAY AND NIGHT MEETINGS WHICH AMBASSADOR AND ECONOMIC COUNSELOR HAVE HELD WITH FMG OFFICIALS ALMOST DAILY FOR PAST WEEK. EVASION AND

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DELAY ON THIS CASE BY FMG ATTRIBUTABLE AT LEAST IN PART TO
APPARENT STRONG SENSITIVITY TO FOREIGN ACTIVITY IN
INSURANC EFIELD, A 'HIGH EARNING, LOW TECHNOLOGY' SECTOR
WHICH NIGERIANS CONFIDENTLY BELIEVE THEY CAN DIRECT WITHOUT
OUTSIDE INVOLVEMENT.

4. RESIDENT AIG REPRESENTATIVE LEFEVRE IS IN DAILY CONTACT WITH
EMBASSY. AS OF TODAY HE HAS STILL NOT RECEIVED PASSPORT BUT IS
TOLD BY COMPANY LAWYER THAT ITS RETURN IS POSSIBLE ON DECEMBER
20. IN EMPHASIZING NEED FOR RETURN OF PASSPORT AT MEA THIS
MORNING, ECON. COUNSELOR WAS INFORMED NOTHING CAN BE DONE
UNTIL COMPLETION OF POLICE REPORT. MEA OFFICIALS CONFIDED THAT
REPORT IS ALMOST FINISHED BUT THERE IS INDICATION THAT CAUSE
OF LEFEVRE ARREST WAS FOREIGN EXCHANGE VIOLATION. IN PREVIOUS
CONVERSATIONS WITH EMBASSY, LEFEVRE HAD ADMITTED THAT COMPANY IN-
ADVERTENTLY CULPABLE OF TECHNICAL VIOLATION IN THIS REGARD.
SUCH A TECHNICABLITY MAY HAVE BEEN SEIZED UPON BY DISGRUNTLED
EMPLOYEE WHO USED INFORMATION TO SMEAR COMPANY WITH
AUTHORITIES.
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Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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SAS ID: 207667
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